

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

Basham Press Release

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For Immediate Release
January 19, 2004

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MICHIGAN SMOKE-FREE DINING ACT WEB SITE RECEIVES 12,500 ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES IN FIRST WEEK

Basham: ‘The response to the Web site has been truly incredible’

www.smokefreediningpetition.com

LANSING – State Sen. Ray Basham (D-Taylor) announced today that the smoke-free dining Web site he unveiled last week has already received more than 12,500 electronic signatures.

“The response to the Web site has been truly incredible and I thank everyone from the bottom of my lungs for signing up to ban smoking in Michigan restaurants,” Basham said. “I know that there is strong sentiment in our state to protect public health, but I am really overwhelmed by this initial response. This is just the first step in our efforts to ban smoking in restaurants and we can use all the support we can get.”

Last Monday, Sen. Basham joined with statewide health advocacy organizations to launch a grassroots effort to rally public support for the Michigan Smoke-free Dining Act (SB 186). Anyone interested in supporting the effort can log on to www.smokefreediningpetition.com to sign the online petition, contact the senator, and find organizations that are supporting this effort.

According to data from Michigan Citizens for Smoke-free Air, nearly three-quarters (73.9 percent) of adults in Michigan do not smoke. The main opponent to the legislation is the Michigan Restaurant Association.

Basham said, “I was shocked to read last week the comments by the restaurants association’s spokesperson stating that they are fighting this issue because they have to protect the rights of customers who ‘enjoy a cigarette with their dinner.’ What about all the other people in that same restaurant who are not enjoying the secondhand smoke coming from that cigarette. Don’t they have rights too?”

He also said, “I’ve been asked by some ‘Where do we draw the line?’ I’m not sure where, but zero deaths linked to secondhand smoke would be a great place to start.”

Secondhand smoke has been classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a Group A carcinogen because it is a known cause of lung cancer in humans and contains 4,000 chemicals including known toxins such as formaldehyde, benzene, and hydrogen cyanide.
